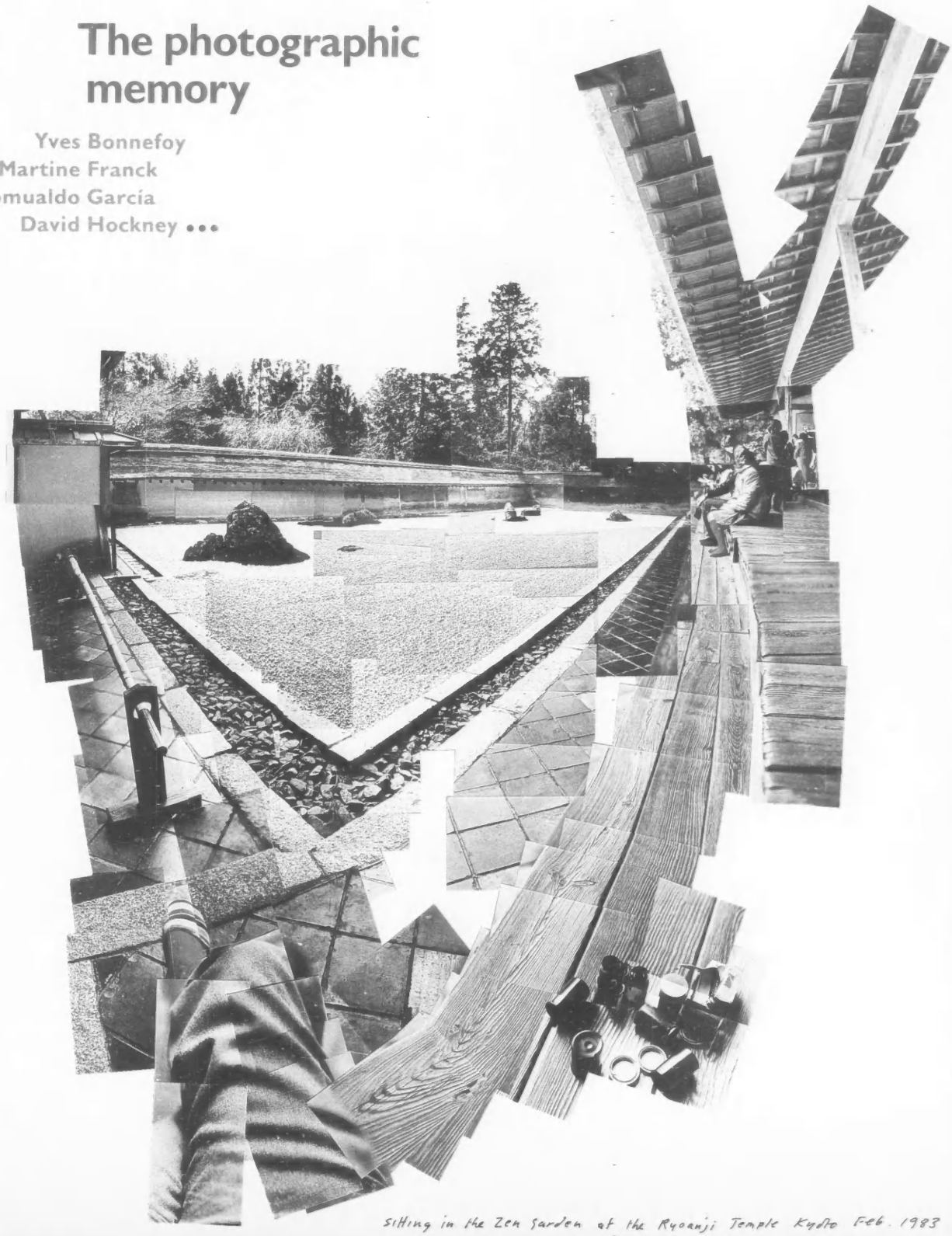
The Courier

The photographic memory

Yves Bonnefoy
Martine Franck
Romualdo García
David Hockney •••



Autochrome from the Albert Kahn Collections, taken by Léon Busy:
Young wonan washing rice near Hanoi, 1915 (see page 16).

April 1988

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Window on the world

Cover: David Hockney, *Sitting in the Zen Garden at the Ryoanji Temple Kyoto Feb. 19 1983*, photocollage, 1983.

Back cover: Ludwig Angerer (1827-1879), "The Photographer", photo of a new camera design shown at Vienna in 1865.

The Courier
A window open on the world 41st year

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40th anniversary issue

With the publication of this issue devoted to photography, the *Unesco Courier* marks its fortieth anniversary. The conception and presentation of the entire number are a departure from the usual *Courier* formula in the sense that priority is given to the pictures; these are complemented by texts which attempt to provide an insight into the mind of the photographer.

The issue has been prepared as an album of photos chosen to illustrate the general theme of photography as a means of memorializing people, places and events. Our coverage of this vast subject is inevitably far from exhaustive—there is, for example, no history of photography nor an account of its many applications in science and technology. The following pages have been designed to highlight a certain approach to photography in an age in which it has become a ubiquitous and perhaps even sometimes an overwhelming medium.

By keeping oblivion at bay and constituting what Charles Baudelaire called the "archives of our memory", by bearing witness to private and public life, forming a documentary record of current events on a national or global scale, or simply capturing the fleeting moment when the eye of the photographer meets the eye of the subject, photography can be an instrument of the utmost value in human communication and understanding.

The professional and non-professional photographers of yesterday and today whose work is featured here, as well as many others whose photos we have been unable to include, all participate in a process which restores life to moments from the past. In the case of four of these photographers, we also evoke, by means of a photo and a short biographical sketch, the work of four earlier masters of the medium with whom they have affinities.

Editor in chief: Edouard Glissant

A photographer's viewpoint

AN INTERVIEW WITH WIM WENDERS

Wim Wenders: *Hot Springs*, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico

WIM WENDERS

of the Federal Republic of Germany, is a film-maker. In 1975 he set up his own company, Road Movies. A number of his films have won him an international reputation. They include *Alice in den Städten* (1973; *Alice in the Cities*), *Im Lauf der Zeit* (1976; *Kings of the Road*), *Der amerikanische Freund* (1977; *The American Friend*), *Lightning Over Water/Nick's Movie* (1980), *Paris, Texas* (1984) and *Der Himmel über Berlin* (1987; *Wings of Desire*).

In preparation for the shooting of his film* Paris, Texas *towards the end of 1983, Wim Wenders travelled around the American West armed with a medium-size hand camera, a Makina-Plaubel 6 x 7. During this journey through Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California looking for locations, he was struck by the seemingly infinite landscapes bathed in light and colour that often only retained a fleeting trace of civilization. The series of colour pictures which he took with this camera are both a tribute to the semi-mythical emotive power of the landscape and a reflection on memory. A selection of these photographs was published in 1987 under the title* Written in the West, *with an accompanying interview between Wim Wenders and the French critic and film director Alain Bergala, extracts from which we publish here.

Would you say that photography, more than film, allows you to capture an image of something that you are seeing for the first time?

Yes. With photography, you can visit a place only once. When you return to a place, you seldom feel any desire to take photographs. For me, the known or the familiar virtually rules out photography, which is a means of exploration, a journey. It's a bit like a car or plane, which takes you somewhere. A camera takes you somewhere.

Above all, it makes it possible to stop and take things in properly.

Especially in the West, travelling by car, the camera gave me a reason and an obligation to stop. I don't take photographs out of the window.

How did it happen, exactly—stopping, deciding to take a photograph and choosing the frame for the subject?

You arrive in a place, a village, for example, you stop, and you feel a sort of excitement, even before you have come across

Wim Wenders: *Portrait*, Odessa, Texas

what you are going to photograph. You have a feeling for the place: there is something in the light, a special atmosphere. My photographs are often linked to a certain surface texture of landscape and houses. That particular surface is something that you feel before you have really found the place to photograph. For example, I arrived in a little town in New Mexico which is also called Las Vegas, and there I took a photograph of an empty shop, painted blue and red. I had a presentiment, when I started strolling around, that I would find this house. Arriving in that deserted town, with that afternoon light and nobody in the streets, I knew that I would stay there and that I would have to find a hotel, because I would not be able to leave again. The place could not be in the film because it was too remote, but I went there because I was interested in seeing another Las Vegas.

In the West, there are a lot of billboards and cinema façades that have already been half eaten away by the elements and are in the process of disappearing. There is a connection between photography and this damaged surface. In the cinema, too, I have often chosen a site for shooting because I knew that a particular house was going to be demolished. For example, in *The American Friend*, we filmed in front of a row of houses because we had read in a newspaper that the whole neighbourhood was going to be demolished. In large cities like Houston, the opposite is true: the surface was so new that it all looked like a model.

So making an image means looking at things before they disappear ...

In these photos there is the desire to look at something and the desire to keep it. The word is appropriate in French: *re-garder*. The photographs taken by Walker Evans during the Depression convey this exactly: looking at and committing to memory something that was going to disappear in three or four years' time.

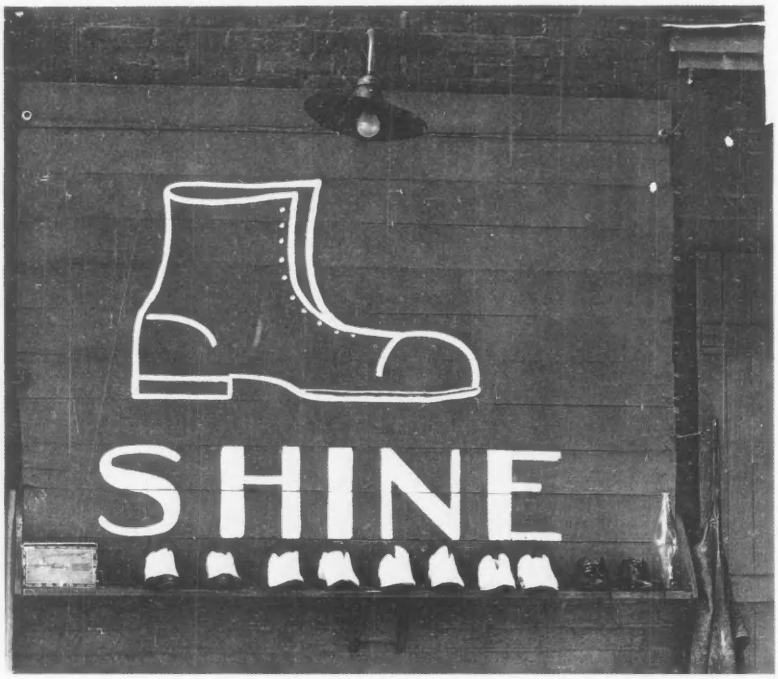
This is just the feeling that we have when we look at photographs by Atget[1] of certain street corners and little shops in Paris ...

I think this was his whole ethic: that he saw himself as a "preserver". I always appreciate this preservation side of photography.

It gives all these photographs an air of the end of the world, especially the little towns, street corners and shops ... As if you had taken these photographs just after the world had come to an end. We do not get the same feeling from *Paris, Texas*, which conveys a sense of beginning, among other things. In this voyage of discovery, was there a melancholy feeling connected with the photography?

Melancholy is also connected with the American West, and we can talk about that. But in photography, more than in film, there is an idea of the end of the world. I remember what Nicholas Ray[2] said to me one day about some actors whom he was teaching.

1. Eugène Atget (1857-1927) photographed the architecture of old Paris.
2. Nicholas Ray (pseudonym of Raymond Nicholas Kienzle, 1911-1979), American film director, whose works include *Johnny Guitar* (1954) and, with Wim Wenders, *Lightning Over Water/Nick's Movie* (1980).



WALKER EVANS
(1903-1975)

Shoeshine Sign in a Southern Town, 1936. This American photographer, with whom Wim Wenders has affinities, produced a powerful body of work. His precisely detailed, frontal depictions of reality have profoundly influenced contemporary photography. He is known best for the reports carried out in the 1930s for the Farm Security Administration in the United States, in which he recorded the poverty of rural victims of the Depression. He was also a portraitist who recorded scenes in the subway (1938) and on the Chicago streets in the 1940s. In the 1950s, he produced a series of industrial landscapes seen from trains.

He told them: "Even if you are asking for a light for your cigarette, or if you simply say hello, it is absolutely necessary that you do it as if it were for the last time." I was impressed by this idea of doing something as if it were for the last time, and for me this is connected with photography. That is the "end of the world" side of things. In fact, I took this photograph because I knew that it was the first and last time that I would see this house. But, conversely, the very fact that there is a photograph proves that the world is continuing.

The idea of the deterioration of houses and billboards, the "end of the world" aspect, is connected with human beings and their constructions. But what happens to trees, landscapes and the natural world in your photographs, in the light of your fondness for capturing things that are crumbling away?

There are very few photographs in which there is no man-made object. In most of them, there is always something which, some day, will not be there any more, and which is perhaps no longer there at this very moment when we are talking about it. Or in ten years or a hundred years from now.

The American West, to me, is the epitome of the place where something disappears. When I was a child, I knew the West through films, westerns and novels, especially the books of Karl May,[3] and it was always my impression that the West was this incredible landscape in the process of being "won", in a past that I located rather vaguely in the nineteenth century. When I went there, having heard all about that conquest, I thought that there would now be civilization. But not at all. Civilization merely passed through, especially with the advent of the motor car in the 1920s and 1930s when the freeways, gas stations and motels were built. But now, when you get there, that whole culture of roads, gasoline pumps, cars, neon signs and motels is no longer necessary. To a great extent it is not even used any more. People no longer travel by car from New York to Los Angeles. Americans tend to live more on the coast, or in the Mid-West for farming, but in the West they have passed through and tried to do something, they have built roads and so on, and they have even thought of building towns—sometimes, in the middle of the desert you find a street called 375th Street—but nothing has worked out, and now only trucks pass through, and a few cars. Civilization arrived, stayed a little while, and is now once again disappearing.

Does your fondness for inscriptions, lettering and billboards stem from the fact that you very much liked the photographs of Walker Evans?

The presence of written inscriptions in the landscape is also a phenomenon characteristic of the West. Since people were not really able to live there, it is my impression that they started to write things so as to feel less alone and to prove that they had conquered this landscape. It's almost as if you had arrived at the North Pole and found twenty or so notices set up by those who had already been there, to prove that they had reached it.

3. Karl May (1842-1912), German author of travel and adventure stories often set in the American West, including *Winnetou* (1893; Eng. trans. 1977).

Wim Wenders: *Western World*, near Four Corners, California

In the United States, this graphic tradition is really remarkable and very advanced. It shows a great deal of imagination and inventiveness and attention to detail in filling in shadows and outlines of letters. The work on the lettering of neon signs and advertisements is quite amazing, and in many cases it is very attractive.

Americans always say: "A man must build a house." And it's true, they build like mad: what they build does not last very long, but there are houses. But very often you also get the impression that a man must first of all paint a sign, and very often the sign is the most valid part of the house. The house itself is tumbledown, but the sign is a fine one. I find these lasting inscriptions very poignant. For example, I passed through an empty place where there was nothing except a sign saying: Western World Development. They must have wanted to sell the land, but nobody came to buy it ...

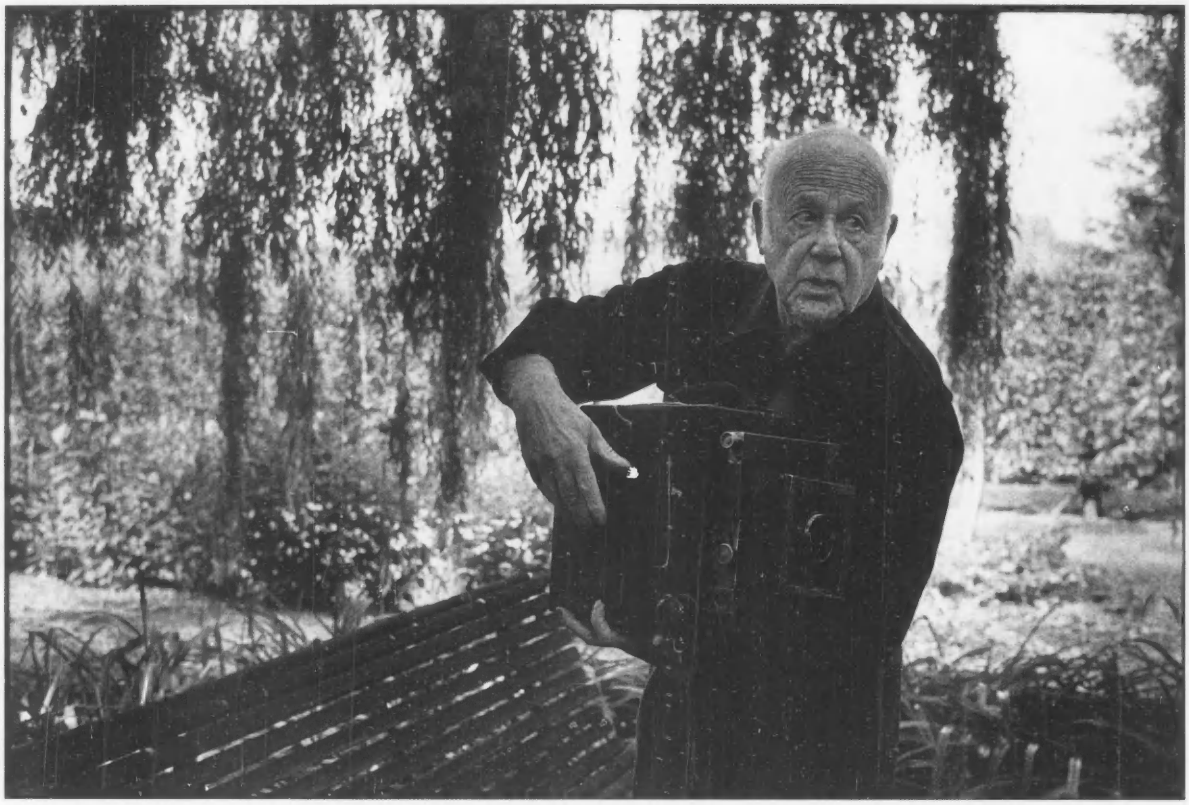
These photographs seem to imply that you favour a frontal, flat approach. Is this a means whereby you turn the things photographed into something sacred, set apart from the flow of passing time and trivial events?

That's true. Things do not know much about time; I am the one who knows about time, because, for one thing, I arrive and depart again. So the head-on way of looking at things, houses and landscapes is also the approach from which I myself am the most absent, and at the same time the most at one with what is in front of me. In the West, the horizon becomes a powerful presence, imposing itself all the time, much more than in the towns. Whatever you do, the horizon is always there, cutting the photograph in two, and all the objects are placed in relation to the horizon, because the perspective draws all lines towards the horizon. If the axis is not frontal, if you adopt another angle, then the object becomes detached from its horizon. This is visually irritating, and it also deprives the objects of something. Moreover, in the American West, everything man-made is highly theatrical. Once you are in an open landscape, direct vision is, in a way, the only possible approach, because any other mode of looking, at an angle—from the side, from above or from below—entails separating an object from its surroundings. With frontal vision, things keep their identity, but from an angle they lose it, and the angle points to the photographer. □

These extracts from Alain Bergala's interview with Wim Wenders have been taken from *Written in the West*, with the kind permission of Schirmer Mosel publishers, Munich. The interview first appeared in the French magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* (Paris, 1987).

The compassionate eye

BY YVES BONNEFOY



Martine Franck: The American photographer Paul Strand (1890-1976) in his garden at Orgeval, near Paris, 1974

MARTINE FRANCK

a Belgian photographer, is a member of the Vu picture agency set up by the French photographer Pierre de Fenoÿl in 1970-1971, and one of the founder members of the Viva agency in Paris. She has also been a member of the Magnum Photo Agency since 1980. Her work has featured in both group exhibitions and one-woman shows and selections have been published as *Le temps de vieillir* (1980) and *Le théâtre du soleil* (1982). To mark her most recent exhibition (13 April to 29 May 1988 at the Maison de la Culture, Amiens, France), a portfolio of 18 photographs has been published with an accompanying text by Yves Bonnefoy.

When I reflect on Martine Franck's work, there comes to mind her portrait of an old man in a home for the aged, seated on the edge of a bed, the wall behind him plastered with erotic photographs. Every opportunity was there for Martine Franck to indulge in that kind of cruelty that is sometimes passed off as a desire to seek truth. Instinctively, however, in those for ever frozen features, those eyes lost in a blank reverie, she saw and showed us that there yet remained a trace of that force that spurred mankind to build the world, to establish values, to bring together and give form to scattered but lasting elements, things in abeyance, in short, to create the absolute.

In this particular instance, as in many others, Martine Franck had the insight to redis.over in a human being with no obvious qualities something of the dignity that is apparent to the highest degree in the ravaged face of Nerval or in Baudelaire's troubled look. Such is the magic that photography can work through the agency of a compassionate being; and through this alchemy, the infinite background of dreams, the idea that one has of oneself, disappears, but something of the absolute appears.

This is the message of the best of those pilgrims who roam the world, Leica in hand. "See," they say, "even in that moment when you are illusion, irrelevance, futility, even in the instant when you are nothing, when you are nothingness itself, you *are*, and, in being, you are everything, you are the all."

Compassion is above all a capacity for self-effacement, for forgetting self in the encounter with others. Of all the contemporary forms of expression, photography alone demands compassion and humility as a *sine qua non*. It demands the kind of humility possessed by the great medieval craftsmen who, in the period that followed the archaic stylizations of their predecessors and before the advent of humanistic refinements, knew so surely how to carve out of a block of wood faces of the madonna, in majesty or in sorrow yet with the features of the most ordinary of women, that were imbued with the reality of the churchyard tree or the flowers in blue clay vases placed before the statues. In its innermost strivings, very mod-

Martine Franck: Examining a painting by Paul Delvaux
at an exhibition of Belgian art held in Paris, 1974

ern art is at one with the best of this religious period.

In my mind's eye I see again Martine Franck one summer's afternoon in the deserted outskirts of a small town in Provence, in the south of France. In the intense heat she emerges abruptly, camera in hand, out of the bright curtain of light. What is she doing? Does she really expect, in this setting so familiar to her, to chance upon the unexpected or some scene of furtive stealth? Is she, I wonder, not there rather just to learn the art of being nothing, of dissolving herself into the nothingness between earth and sky, training herself thus to comply with the demands of her art, of which clearly she has the highest and most noble vision?

When we look at certain photographs, we often ask ourselves: "How did the photographer manage to get so close undetected? With what silent tread did he stalk the fabulous bird as it alighted for just an instant?" Others may wonder: "Does this not make the photographer feel divorced from life, out of the world? What loneliness, what sadness, this constant watchfulness must bring."

The fact is that these soundless steps must first be made within oneself, for it is there, in that inner space, that those intuitive events, those extra-sensory perceptions occur that are the *summum* of an art that is *prima facie* devoted to the externality of things. It is in the intercourse of self with self that no sound must be made that might frighten away a vision or glimpse of a vision. When we succeed in doing this, as we stand with bated breath, far from being outside the world the uplifted soul hears the beating of the deep heart's pulse, the joyful shouts of children at play beneath a line of washing, the wind turning sheets into sails, and the chirruping of cicadas.

Martine Franck walked in silence that summer's day, already in this frame of mind. Had she photographed a peasant woman in a black straw hat, or a child with hand at forehead, warding off the menace of a threatening world, she would simply, directly, as light goes to light, have picked out from the woman's shadowy figure, from the child's rebellious forelock, that look which embodies the One behind the multiple.

Of all Martine Franck's photographs, I like particularly that of Paul Strand. That deep metaphysical solidarity which links her with all her subjects is here made more complex by the fact that the model is himself a photographer, taken unawares at his work, absorbed in his own silent tread. This gives a touch of humour to the ordinary photographic experience, adding to it another degree of reflection which is superbly captured in the very image from which it sprang.

Paul Strand is in a garden in which the play of light on foliage conjures up memories of Claude Monet, his garden at Giverny, Impressionist painting, and an entirely different relationship between art and light. He is holding an ancient, barely portable camera which he is aiming at we know not what target, since it is out of the field of vision of Martine Franck's photograph. One has the feeling that, more than anything else, he is wondering where the devil he can put this cumbrous black box down for a moment.

How long has he been so carefully, even anxiously carrying it around? For forty years maybe judging by his lined forehead;

Martine Franck: Mlle Manago in her apartment at Forcalquier, France, 1979

long enough at any rate to be aware of the dangers of what he is doing and to be conscious of his responsibilities. Burdened with this camera, which evokes the origins of photography, this great photographer seems to be asking : "Have I any right to be here? Am I not planting a time bomb which may destroy the world, despite the element of the eternal in-the light among the foliage?"

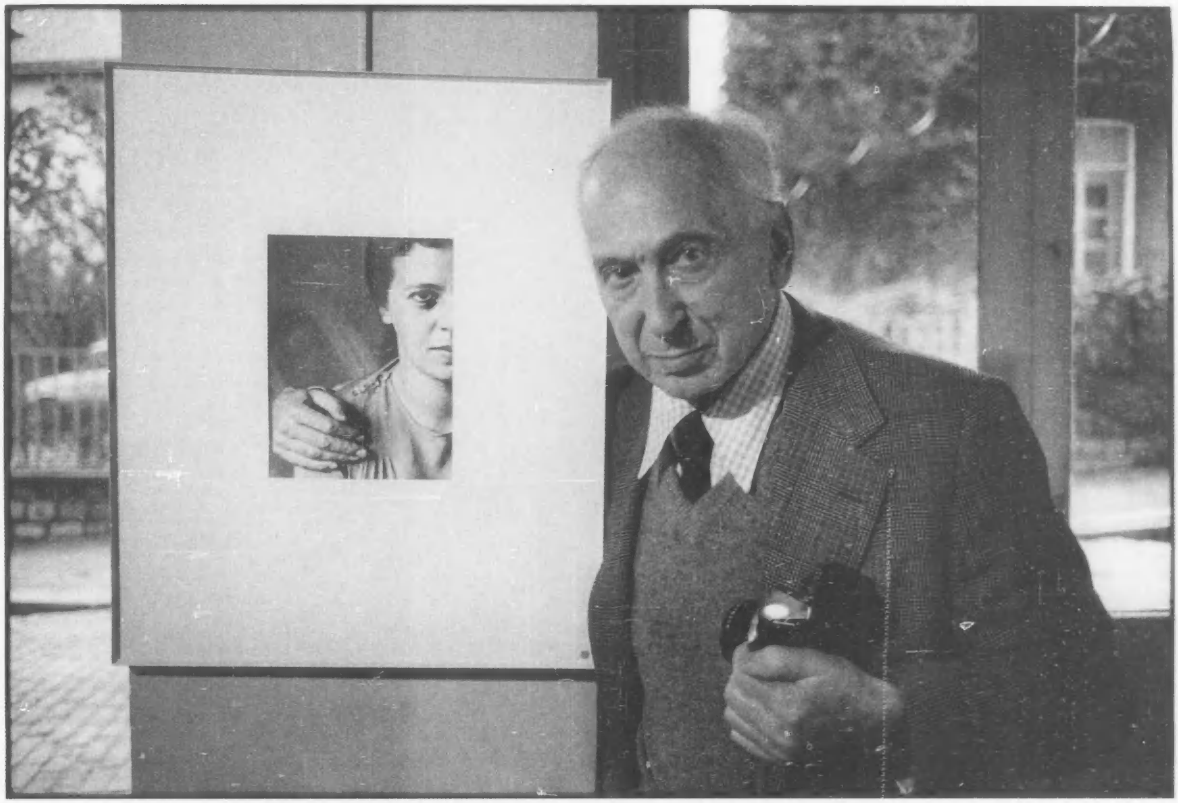
And it is true that photography is dangerous. Some photographers exercise their art with care; it is the others, purveyors of news or fancies, with their reckless hastiness compounded of a truly sacrilegious indifference, who incite us to look only at the outermost exterior, the least significant superficialities. If nineteenth-century photography denounced illusion (bringing the subject into disrepute even in the eyes of painters, and edging them out-of-doors, at Giverny as elsewhere), in the twentieth century it has gone to excess in the rejection of values and the flouting of good sense; it is, it would seem, concerned with nothing but the substance and the celebration of death.

Yet, even now, photography is still one of those rare fields in which can flower—in the persons of a few such as these two, communing in this garden—something, perhaps a great deal, of that enlightenment of the whole being of which the great traditions, and in particular Buddhism, tell us. Martine Franck was right to spice with a generous sprinkling of light humour (a mark of confidence) her meeting amid the trees and flowers with her elder colleague, who views, perhaps, with some dismay, the seemingly countless horde of unseeing photographers invading the whole world, putting it to sack.

Nothing is ever really lost of an art or a skill, when the best that there is in us can still find expression in it, if only fleetingly. Has it not, and have we not too, at least the right to dream? Great revolutions of the spirit are indeed born of a countenance at peace, of a simple smile. So why should we not continue to carry with us along every highway and byway of life that strange box, daily growing smaller and smaller yet more than ever manifestly destined for decisive action, focusing it on that which we love (for ever waiting there, close but invisible). Is the West, indeed the world, destined to perish in a flood of photographs? Who can tell? Perhaps salvation will be found at the edge of doom in the simple, epiphanic message that a few among them have to offer.

Yves Bonnefoy
French writer,
Professor at the Collège de France

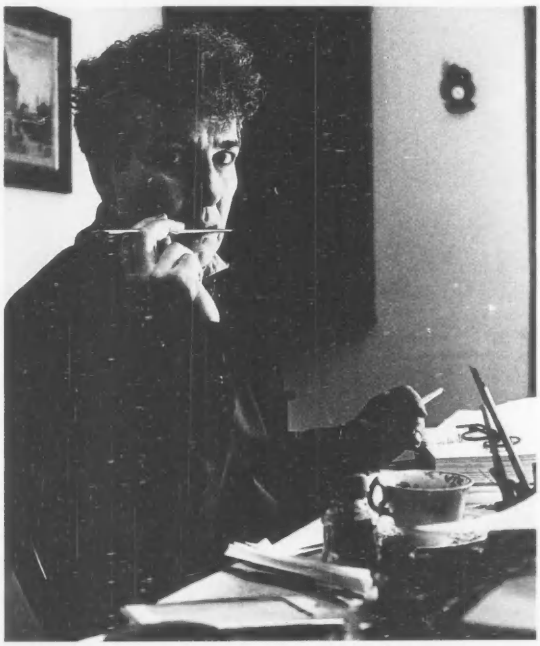
The above text is an abridged version of a study entitled *Martine Franck*, which has appeared in *Portraits, Photographies de Martine Franck* (Trois Cailloux publishers, Maison de la Culture d'Amiens, Amiens, 1988).

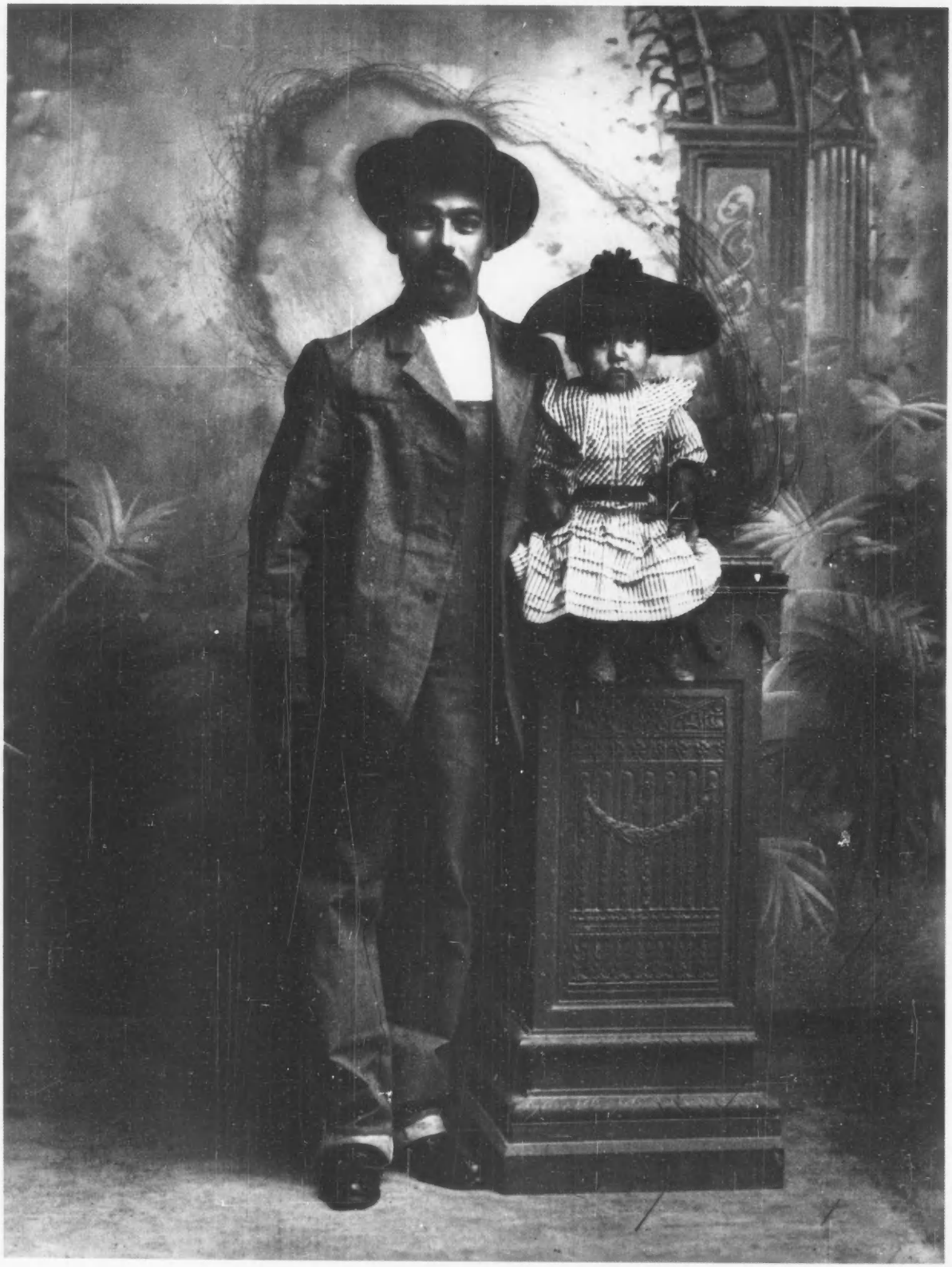


Martine Franck: In Paris, 1980, the Hungarian photographer André Kertész (1894-1985), with a portrait of his wife *(Elizabeth and Me)* which he took in 1931.

BILL
BRANDT
(1904-1983)

Portrait of the British writer Robert Graves (1895-1985), taken in 1941. After working with Man Ray in Paris in 1929 and frequenting the Surrealists, this British photographer went back to England and concentrated mainly on photojournalism. He put together a series of images of life among the different social strata at the time, ranging from working people in industrial towns to the middle and upper classes in their homes and clubs. During the air raids on London in the early 1940s he worked for the Home Office, making a photographic record of city-dwellers in their improvised shelters. From 1945-1965 he photographed writers and artists in their working environment for *Lilliput* magazine. These powerful and shrewd portraits are greatly admired by Martine Franck. He was also an innovator in studies of the female nude, using distorted perspectives and unconventional lighting.





Unvarnished portraits

BY ALFREDO CRUZ RAMIREZ

Romualdo García

ROMUALDO GARCIA

Romualdo García was born in 1852 in Silao, near Guanajuato, Mexico, where he was later to set up as a photographer. Guanajuato was a flourishing mining town in his day, with a School of Applied Arts that was open to new techniques such as that of photography.

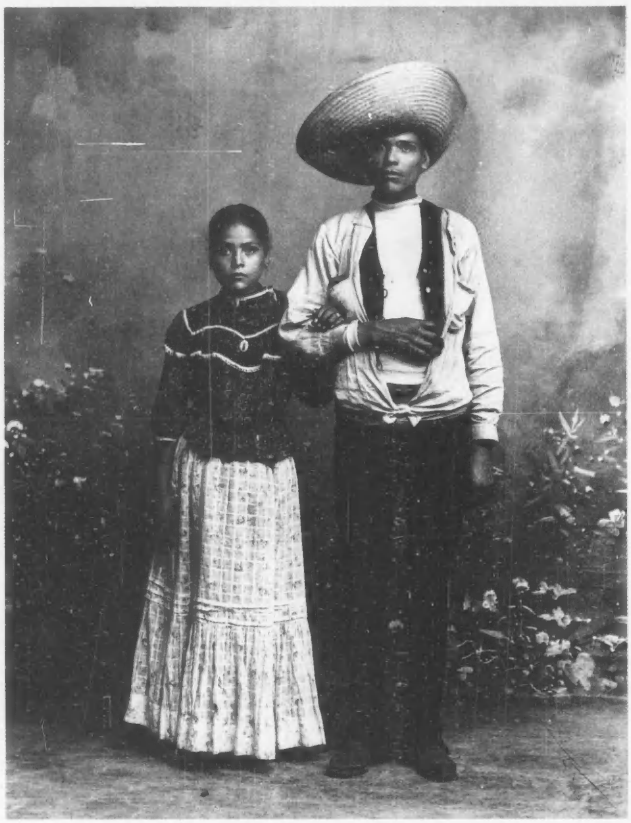
Thanks to Romualdo García's photographic studio, the art of portraiture was democratized. Ordinary people from all walks of life—labourers, clerks, farmers—came along in their best clothes on high days and holidays, when there was something to celebrate, or simply after church on Sundays. The sitting at the photographer's would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most of them, a "bit of a treat", not the result of having to "keep up with the Joneses" as was the case in Europe. People had their pictures taken just as they were, in their awkwardness, happiness, pride or sentimentality. Group portraits at entertainments, family album pictures extolling the bonds of kinship, couples flaunting their love or their complicity, pictures to remember grandparents by, or souvenirs of the "little angels", those children who died while still babies. The photographs are reminiscent

of the folk-art tradition, with their poses often borrowed from religious imagery.

Romualdo García was awarded a bronze medal for his portraits at the Paris International Exhibition of 1889, and his work also attracted attention at the 1900 Exhibition. The García studio was doing very well at that time, but after the Mexican Revolution of 1910, it came up against financial difficulties and was taken over by the founder's children when he died in 1930. His work was rediscovered as recently as 1978, when research was first carried out on this rich collection of images, an incomparable visual testimony to his country's heritage.

The work of the García studio is both a unique record of daily life strongly rooted in the 19th century, and a demonstration of people's genuineness in front of the camera, the frankness of a golden age that had confidence in the magical new technology, notwithstanding certain misgivings as to its efficacity. □

The photographs reproduced here appeared in the exhibition "Romualdo García, an early Mexican portrait photographer", organized by the art historian and museologist Alfredo Cruz Ramirez, with the assistance of the "Paris-Audiovisuel" Association, the Museum of Alhóndiga de Granaditas in Guanajuato (Mexico) and Flor Garduño, a Mexican photographer. The exhibition was first shown in Paris, at the National Photography Centre (Musée du Palais de Tokyo), from October 1987 to February 1988.



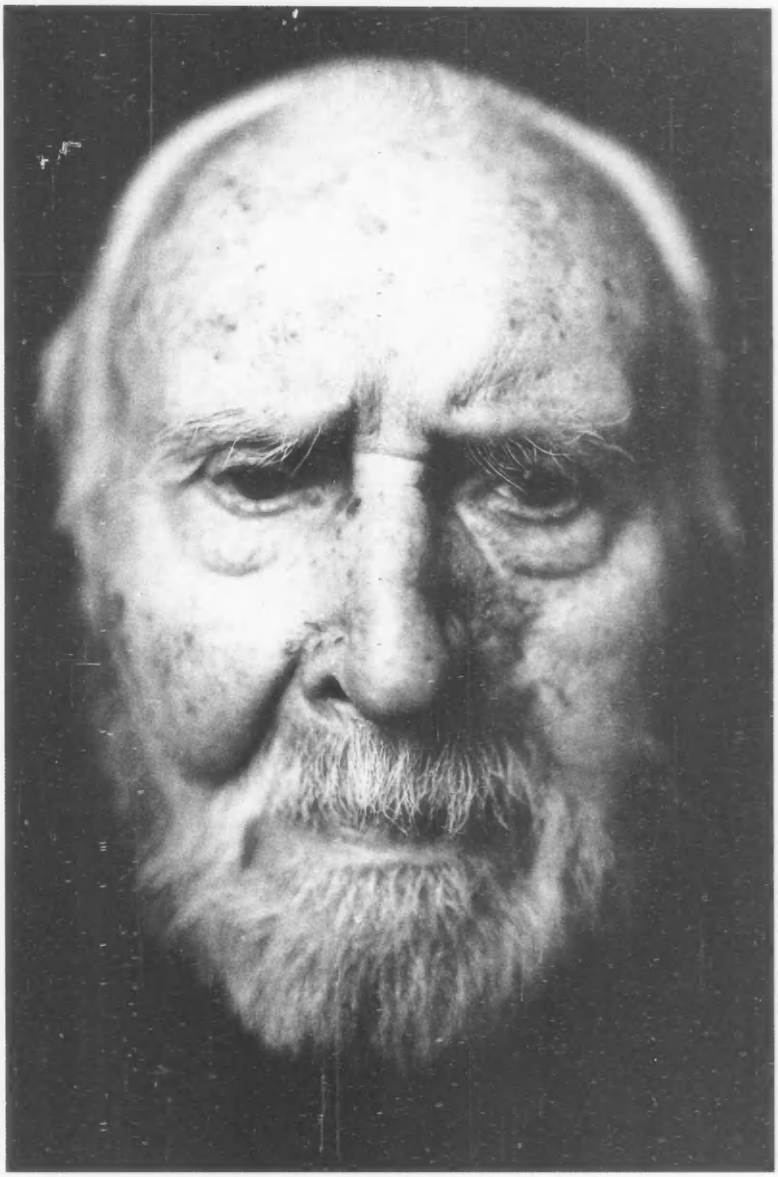
Romualdo García

A time-spun art

BY EDOUARD GLISSANT

MORHOR

a writer, artist and photographer of French origin, divides his time between the Antilles, France and Greece. In 1987, he held an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City entitled *Testigo mudo* ("Mute Witness"), which consisted of portraits of artists and intellectuals, for the most part Mexican. Two albums of his work will be published next year, one of large-format portraits and the other a collective work on the theme of "The new Gulliver's travels", on which Morhor has collaborated with a number of painters.



Morhor: The French painter André Masson (1896-1987)

Just as the waters of a river change as they flow to the sea, so Morhor's art ripens and matures, in dogged quest of its own definition. It is an art which might be likened to a journey of initiation, throughout which the voyager seeks to attain the node, the focal point wherein all human care is subsumed. At first Morhor used to place those he photographed against a stark background, a recessed doorway or an abandoned room, as though to warn them against those distractions of existence that tend to distance us from our own verities. Gradually he came closer to those who—one cannot call them models—are best described as his interlocutors, his conversation companions, even, perhaps, his confidants. It took him a long time to abbreviate this short, yet infinite, distance. It is as though, from then on, on the evidence of the face alone, divorced from its setting, he focused on that invisible breakline that announces the time, the need to depart, to grow old, and yet to endure.

The portrait thus evoked is not a death mask; rather it is the shade of a *doppelganger*. Not one of those whom Morhor thus encountered is reduced simply to an effigy that marked his route, an unyielding milestone. There is a response at the other end of this voyage. Morhor incites communication, the complicity of continuity. He hears the echo and questions and consults it. We can but admire and understand him as he constructs this precious, fragile "brushwood rampart", so redolent of the future. □

Archives of the Planet

Auguste Léon: Children in Aswân, Egypt, 1914

"Life. We must seize it wherever it is, abroad, in the street, everywhere." These words of Albert Kahn (1860-1940) could have served as his motto. This French financier invested his immense wealth in an ambitious humanitarian project which became his life's work: to reconcile the peoples of the world through furthering communication, by all possible means, between those "who hold in their hands the destiny of nations". He was one of the first men whose actions kindled the idea of internationalism.

In 1910, grasping the importance of photography and cinema as major mediums for documenting the human heritage, he decided to draw up, under the title of "Archives of the Planet", a "kind of photographic inventory of the surface of the globe, as inhabited and worked by man, as it was at the beginning of the century", in order to "fix in the memory once and for all the different aspects of human activity, the customs and practices, the inevitable disappearance of which is only a question of time".

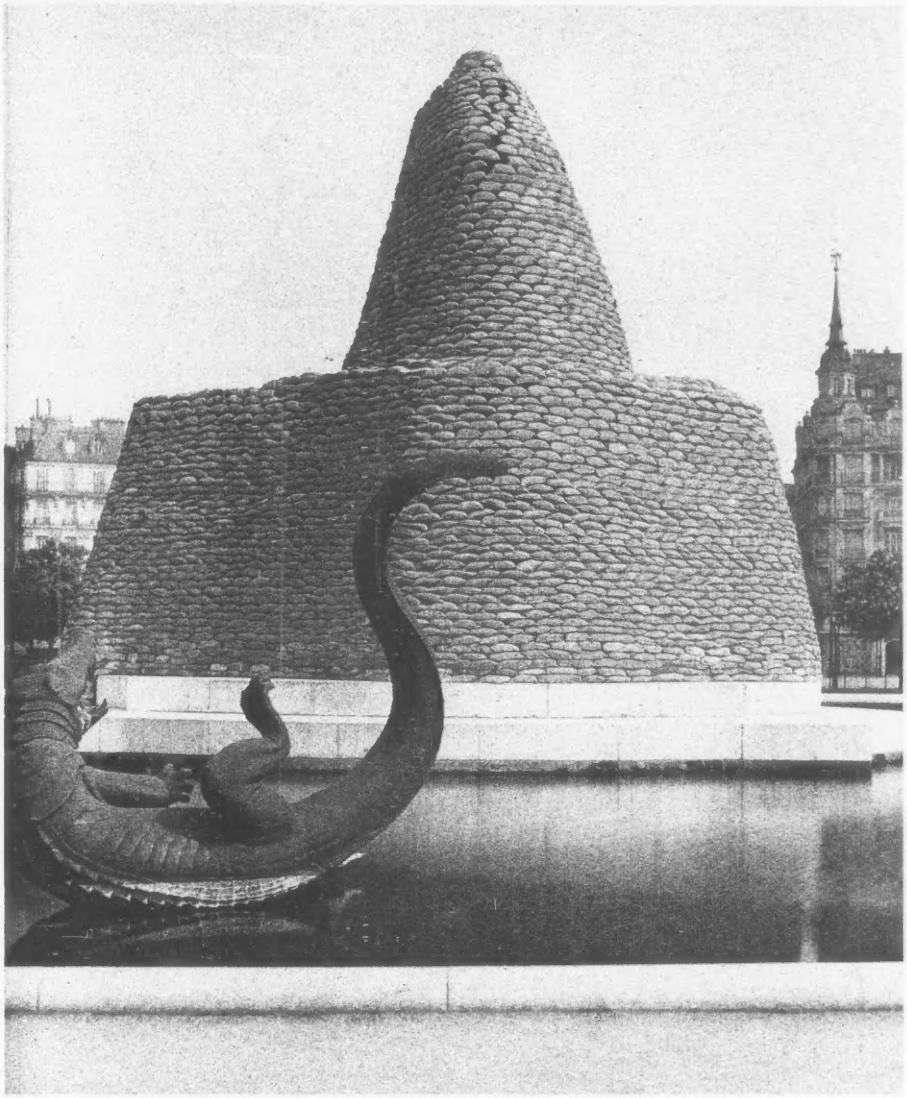
A breakthrough in photographic techniques had just occurred—the autochrome process, developed by the Lumière brothers—which meant that colours could be directly reproduced for the first time. Kahn entrusted Jean Brunhes, pioneer of human geography in France, with the responsibility of directing the missions of photographers and film-makers who, from 1910 to 1931 (the date of Kahn's financial ruin), travelled the world and brought back around 72,000 autochrome plates and some 140,000 metres of film. Far from being taken at random, these images were intended to be of great significance, not only in themselves but also as regards the accompanying documentary records, which have not yet all been brought together. The pictures were later shown to the personalities from all over the world whom Kahn invited to his home.

Of this inspired innovator, who in the service of the "planetary" philanthropic mission which he felt was invested in him, set up a number of foundations, bursaries and a club, *Autour du Monde*, whose members widened their horizons by travel, two memorials remain. The gardens, revealing inspiration from many lands, which Kahn laid out at his home in Boulogne-sur-Seine, France, and the "Archives of the Planet", now reorganized into a photo-library and a film-library. The gardens and the libraries are open to the public.

Three autochromes from this unique collection are reproduced here in black and white, and another in colour on page 2. □

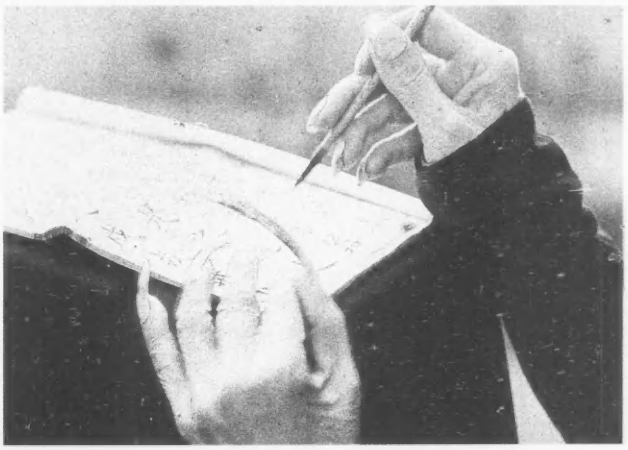
THE ALBERT KAHN COLLECTIONS

Autochromes from the Albert Kahn Collections have been reproduced in colour in several books, including *Les Archives de la Planète*, in two volumes ("France", and "The World"), with an introductory text by Jeanne Beausoleil, curator of the Albert Kahn Collections, and Mariel J. Brunhes Delamarre (Hachette Réalités, Paris, 1979), and *Villages et villageois au Tonkin 1915 et 1920* (Albert Kahn Collections, 1987). A collection of autochromes taken in Ireland in 1913 will be published shortly. A comprehensive catalogue was compiled for the exhibition "Au-delà d'un jardin ... Albert Kahn", which was held at the Cultural Centre, Boulogne-Billancourt, in 1986.



Auguste Léon: Place de la Nation, Paris, 14 May 1918, during the First World War.
Sandbags protect the "Triumph of the Republic" monument from bombardments.

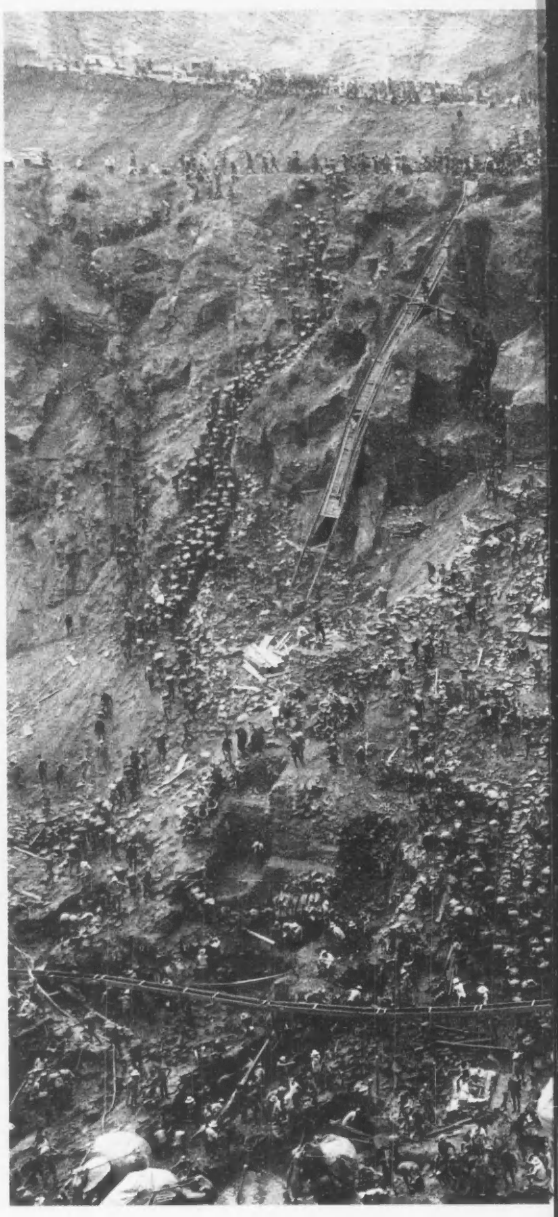
Léon Busy: Hands of a writer, Tonkin
(northern Viet Nam during the French colonial period), 1915



A global report on people at work

BY SEBASTIÃO SALGADO

Sebastião Salgado: The opencast gold mine of Serra Pelada, around 400 km south of Belém (Pará State), Brazil



SEBASTIÃO SALGADO

is a Brazilian photojournalist. Since 1973 he has carried out a number of photo reports in different countries of Africa, Latin America and Europe. In 1982 he was awarded the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund Grant in Humanistic Photography (United States) for his Latin American report, and in 1985 he received the World Press Photo Prize from the Holland Foundation (Netherlands) for pictures taken in Ethiopia. Apart from his contributions to group exhibitions, he has had many one-man shows in European capitals, and is the author of two books, *Sahel, l'homme en détresse* (1986) and *Other Americas* (1986). In 1987 he embarked on a worldwide photographic survey, which has already taken him to many countries, on the theme of people at work. A selection of these photos is reproduced on the following pages, together with an explanatory text by the photographer.

My goal is to portray people at work and to draw up a world picture of traditional industries at the end of the 20th century, as new technologies supplant the old ways, taking the word "industry" in its widest sense, that is to say, mechanical and manual "productive activity". I would like to put together a visual document illustrating the different manufacturing processes still in use today. This will include examples of craftsmanship as well as those techniques used by heavy industry and the primary sector (large scale

agricultural production and the mining industry).

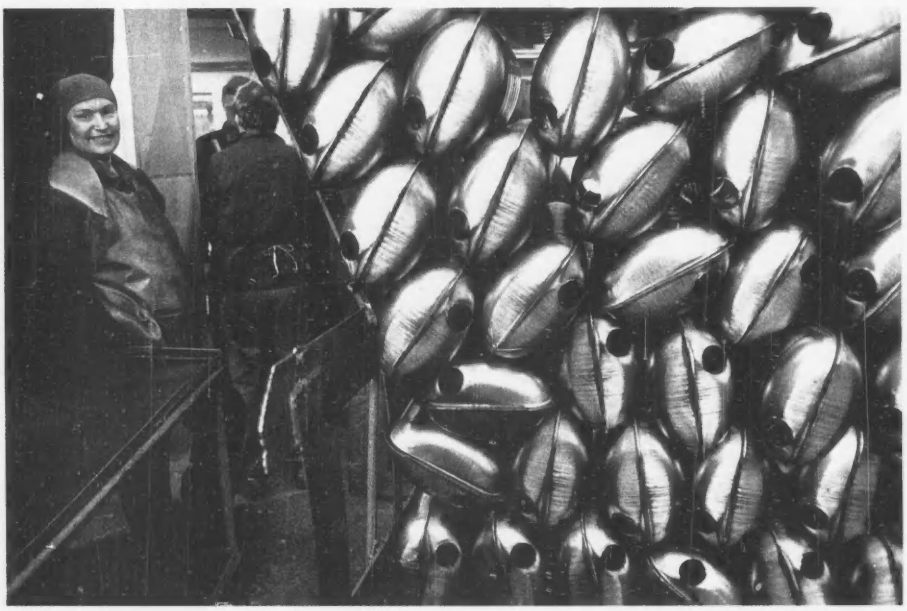
The underlying idea is that we are today witnessing the transition from the industrial age to what could be called the "techno-atomic" era. During this transition period, the overall methods of production are completely changing. This transformation is itself the historical product of the accumulation of intellectual, technical and scientific achievements. It is by continually reflecting on the nature of work that we make changes in it. In recent years, we have attached importance to natural resources and to their preservation. The decrease in available natural resources (raw materials as well as sources of energy) has obliged us to look again at notions of productivity and output and to redefine our needs.

The growing degree of specialization brought about by high technology means that man must eventually abandon the traditional role of worker-producer, of his own free will, and replace it with that of observer-manager. In years to come, these changes in the role of the worker will even take place in developing countries.

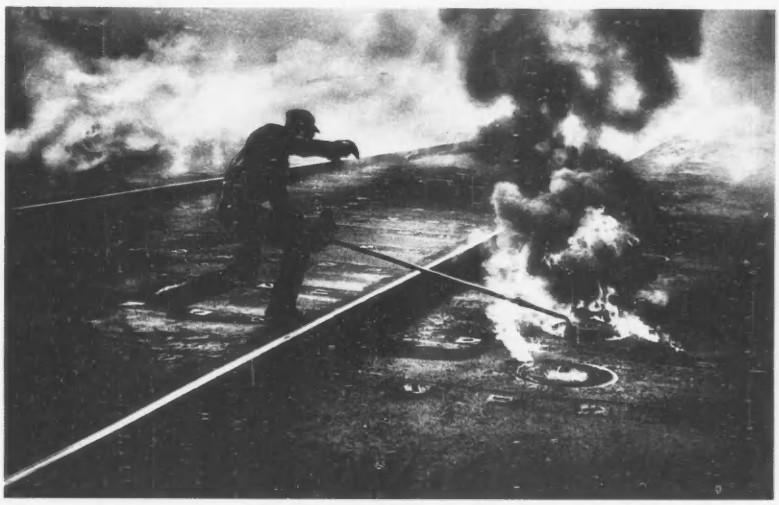
This photographic survey thus sets out to be a kind of archive, a visual record of working people and their heritage as the 21st century approaches. In photographing scenes from an age of production before it disappears, seeing it as a whole, I hope to make a small contribution to the age to come, a testimony for tomorrow's workers, showing what work was like in our day. □

Sebastião Salgado: Sugar cane plantation at Jaboticabal (São Paulo State), Brazil

Sebastião Salgado: Automobile factory at Zaporozhye, the Ukrainian SSR



Sebastião Salgado: Steelworks at Zaporozhye, the Ukrainian SSR



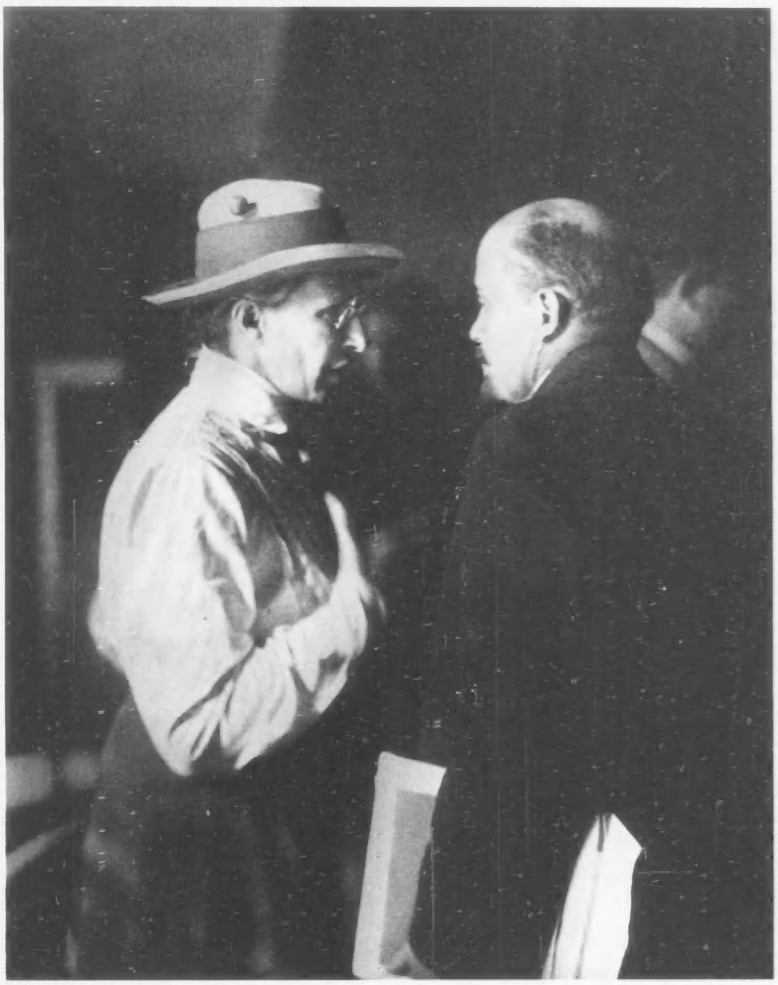
WILLIAM EUGENE SMITH
(1918-1978)

Pittsburgh, 1955. The picture stories of this great American photographer, an inspiration to Sebastião Salgado, are the work of an accomplished artist and humanist with a rigorous and honest approach. They include "Pittsburgh, the story of an American city", on one of the major centres of the iron and steel industry in the United States; and a series of combat photographs of the war in the Pacific, where Smith was seriously wounded. Many of his photo sequences were taken for *Life* magazine, including "The Country Doctor" (1948), "Spanish Village" (1951), "Nurse Midwife" (1951) and "Minamata" (1973), a report he made with his wife Aileen on the victims of mercury pollution in a Japanese fishing community.

Pioneers of Soviet photography

ARKADY SAMOILOVICH SHAIKHET ▶

Ilyich's Little Lamp, 1925. Installation of the first electric light-bulb in a peasant cottage; Lenin (the pseudonym of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov) said: "Communism is the power of the Soviets plus electricity." In the 1930s, Shaikhet (1898-1959) worked as a photo reporter on several newspapers and periodicals such as *USSR in Construction* and *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*. His images, showing the world of work, blur the dividing-line between journalism and art photography. This photograph, which became a classic, appeared with other documentary photographs in the exhibition that he presented in 1928, "Ten Years of Soviet Photography".



VIKTOR KARLOVICH BULLA ▶

Elena Stasova and Vladimir I. Lenin, Moscow, 1920. Bulla (1883-1944) was born into a family of photographers, and he became one of the young photojournalists who recorded the events of the Revolution. He was the author of many famous photographs of Lenin taken during the latter's public addresses in the streets or during the Comintern (Third Communist International) congresses. The Soviet State Archives contain more than 130,000 negatives of the photographs taken by the Bulla brothers and their father and also some thirty films.

◀ **MAX VLADIMIROVICH ALPERT**

Construction Site of the Fergana Grand Canal, 1939. Between 1930 and 1950 an irrigation canal was dug with picks and shovels in the Fergana Valley, which extends into the territories of the Uzbek, Kirgiz and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republics. In the photograph can be seen the musical instruments which gave rhythm to this Herculean task. Alpert (1899-1981) started work in 1924, first for the *Rabochaya Gazeta* and later for *Pravda*. Some of his best-known photo reports include his stage-by-stage accounts of the building of the Turkestan-Siberia railway and the Fergana Canal. He worked on the magazine *USSR in Construction*, which attracted the cream of Soviet photographic reporting. Alpert was one of the pioneers of the picture story on a grand scale.

In 1917, the October Revolution marked the turning-point when Russia broke with its past and staked everything on the future: photography at that time became a means of capturing events, working for the Revolution and keeping a record. Photographers such as Karl Bulla and Pyotr Otsup were pioneers of photographic reporting, and the chronicle that they began was brilliantly continued in later years by photojournalists such as Arkady Shaikhet and Max Alpert. Meanwhile, portrait photographers such as Mikhail Nappelbaum and Abram Shterenberg were inventing their own new styles.

With Aleksandr Rodchenko, in the 1920s, photography was in the forefront of modern art: "We are seeking a new aesthetic, we must find it and we will find it (rest assured) ..." As the first great virtuoso of photomontage in Russia (see page 25), Rodchenko brought new life to both journalism and portraiture, through the boldness of his formal designs and his skill in framing the subject. His influence was immense.

Seen through the eyes of these and many other photographers who were as politically committed as they were inspired, and who were witnesses but also agents of the Revolution, workers, peasants, leaders and even large construction sites took on an aura of universality and their story acquired the resonance of a prophecy. □

These photographs, with more than 300 others, are reproduced in *Pioneers of Soviet Photography*, published by Thames and Hudson, London, 1983, with a preface by François Mathey and an introductory essay by Grigory Shudakov on Soviet photographers from 1917 to 1940.

ALEKSANDR MIKHAILOVICH RODCHENKO

Fire Escape, 1925. Rodchenko (1891-1956) started out as a painter and graphic artist. After the Revolution, he became a lecturer at the Higher Institute of Art and Technique. With the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, his friend and intellectual colleague, he produced posters and books, with the theatre producer Vsevolod Meyerhold he created scenery for the stage, and with the film-makers Lev Kulechov and Boris Barnett he worked for the cinema. In the 1930s, he became an outstanding figure in the *Oktiabr* ("October") art group, a leading movement in photography and film. He launched the periodical *USSR in Construction* in partnership with his wife, Varvara Stepanova, with the encouragement of the writer Maksim Gorky, and supplied it with photographic reports, including one on the White Sea Canal, and, above all, page layouts and cover designs. He was also a leading theorist of the art of photography.

PHOTOMONTAGE

Manipulation of the photograph is as old as photography itself. The origins of photomontage techniques can be traced back to the 19th century. In the 1920s, however, the idea was rediscovered by the Berlin Dadaists, centred on George Grosz and John Heartfield, and photomontage became extremely popular. Whether used for Dadaist subversive art or surrealist fantasies, applied to political propaganda or to enliven publicity and commercial art, this medium which altered normal perception made photography a part of all the avant-garde movements of the inter-war years. In the USSR, photomontage was a favoured means of expression in revolutionary art. Above right, one of a series of photomontages by Aleksandr Rodchenko illustrating *Pro eto* (1923; "About This"), a poem by Vladimir Mayakovsky (1894-1930), a leading poet of the Russian Revolution. The young woman is Lili Brik, the poet's lover and elder sister of the French writer Elsa Triolet. Rodchenko made a number of photomontages with already existing images before starting to practice photography himself.

'A revolution in seeing' BY ANNE HOY

DAVID HOCKNEY

is a British artist whose varied creative output encompasses paintings, prints, drawings and stage designs as well as photographic collages and other "cameraworks". Many of his works are set in his own everyday world and are filled with recurring themes, such as Californian swimming pools and portraits of his friends and members of his family. His photographic collages have been published as *David Hockney Cameraworks* (London, 1984). In *David Hockney: A Retrospective* (1988), the volume which catalogues the exhibition of the same name which is currently being shown at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, his photocollages form the subject of a study by Anne Hoy from which this article is taken.

This abridged version of a text by Anne Hoy is reprinted by permission of the publishers, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, L.A., and Harry N. Abrams, Inc., N.Y., from the book *David Hockney: A Retrospective* organized by L.A.C.M.A., 1988. Published in the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth by Thames & Hudson, Ltd., London, 1988. Published in the Federal Republic of Germany by Dumont Buchverlag, Cologne, 1988. © 1988 Museum Associates, L.A.C.M.A.

Up to February 1982 David Hockney scorned the camera as nothing more than a recording device. Photographs did not hold his attention. "You'd never look at a photo for more than thirty seconds," he said, "unless there were a thousand faces and you were looking for your mother."

Though he took "holiday snaps" beginning in 1963 and made photographs as preliminary studies for his paintings from 1968 on, he considered the camera inferior to life drawing as a means of rendering "weight and volume". In his paintings, especially through 1972, he exploited the photograph's intensification of effects of light and the flat, dazzling colour of commercial processing but found photography false to perception and to the actual experience of time and space.

"Photography is all right," he commented, "if you don't mind looking at the world from the point of view of a paralysed cyclops—for a split second."

But when a visiting curator left some packages of Polaroid film in Hockney's newly decorated house in the Hollywood Hills, he decided to try to represent its three spatial areas. What began on 26 February 1982, with a thirty-print composite, grew into over-life-size, full-length Polaroid portraits of his friends, then into vast photocollages of famous American scenery and complex portrait narratives made from 35 mm prints, and climaxed five years later in a panoramic Western landscape composed of more than 600 prints. Between March and May 1982 Hockney made more than 140 Polaroid collages. Then, from September 1982 to August 1986, he produced 231 photocollages with Pentax 110 single-lens reflex and 35 mm Nikon cameras. He has made no large-scale photocollages since.

In their sheer number and monumental elaboration Hockney's photocollages are a major body of work within his career. Of a piece with his paintings, drawings and prints, his camera art is sunny in spirit, personal, even diaristic, in subject matter, and experimental and spontaneous in technique.

In his photocollages, as in his other work, Hockney explores lines and edges; he called his first exhibition of photocollages *Drawing with the Camera*. He also employs photography as a reproductive tool, like etching, lithography, or most recently the office photocopier, but exploits its special features.

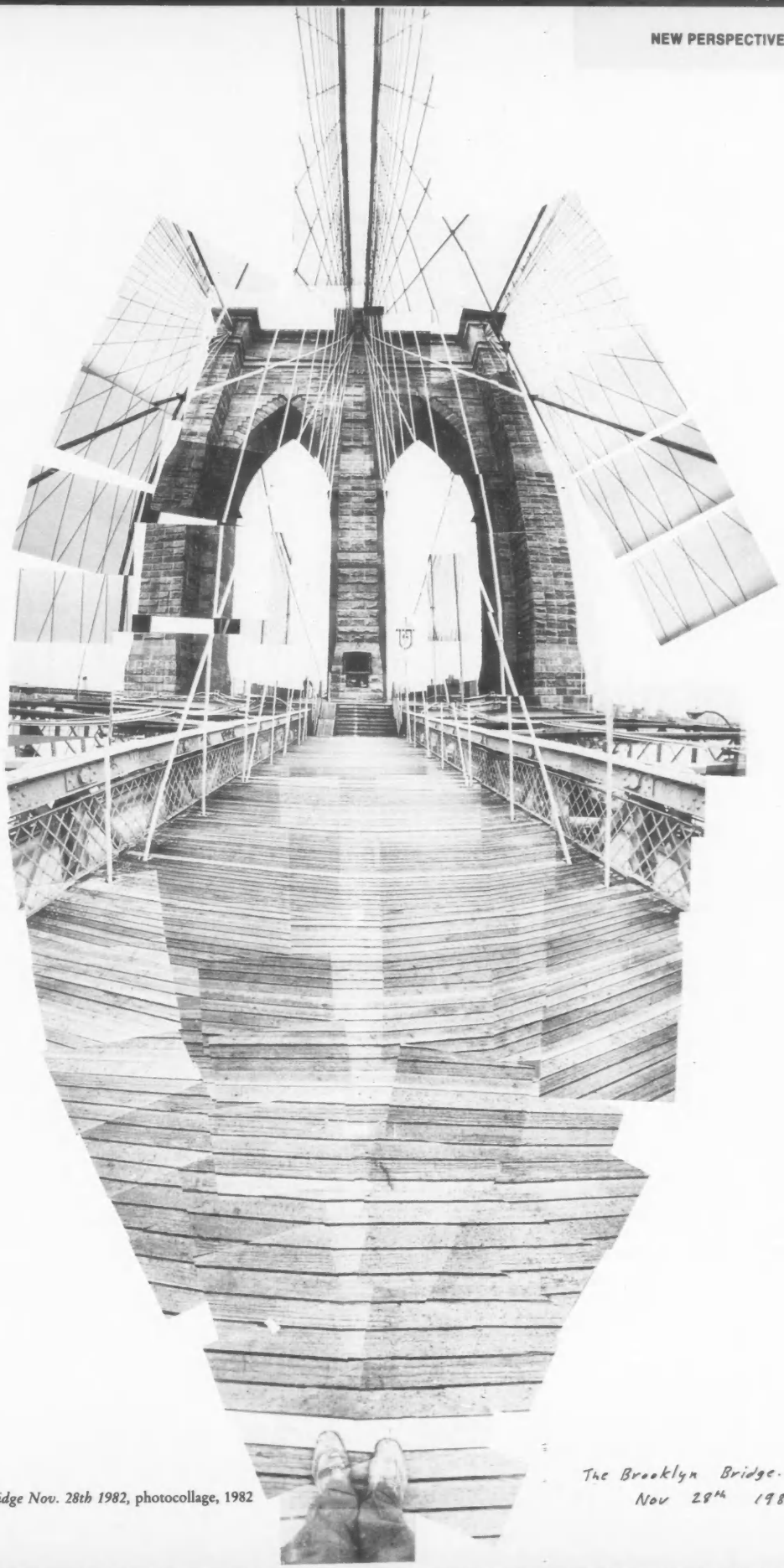
His photocollages are accessible in content and means. Indeed Hockney welcomes the recent imitations of them in American magazine advertisements and French tourist promotions. To him these replicas forecast the "revolution in seeing" he hopes his camera art will foster.

The revolution Hockney seeks is through Modernism. In this regard his photocollages define issues latent in his previous work and give them unique, spectacular resolution. "In a way Modernist art hasn't triumphed yet!" Hockney remarks. "Because we're still stuck with the Renaissance picture—which is the photograph—and we believe it's the most vivid representation of reality."

Conventional painting and photography, which ratify one-point perspective, create, not greater realism, but greater distance between spectator and subject, he believes. And with ordinary photographs the viewer lacks the compensation of handwork offered even by perspectival painting, the verisimilitude gained, Hockney says, as "the hand moving through time reflects the eye moving through time (and life moving through time)".

To circumvent these limitations, Hockney turned to Modernist collaging of many photographs. As early as 1970 he had taken photographs sequentially and pasted them down edge to edge as a means of recording more information in architectural studies but without the distortion of a wide-angle lens. He called these works "joiners".

Eventually he realized "that if you put six pictures together, you look at them six times. This is more what it's like to look at someone." He notes that the gaze moves perpetually, that visual experience is a composite of shifting views focused by interest and inflected by concept and memory. Sensations of depth and movement are intrinsic to eyesight, he observes, upholding the definition of perception known since Impression-



David Hockney:
The Brooklyn Bridge Nov. 28th 1982, photocollage, 1982

David Hockney:
The Crossword Puzzle Minneapolis Jan. 1983, photocollage, 1983

ism and seen in Cubism. While a single photograph can encapsulate only a frozen moment—Hockney calls such pictures "one-eyed"—a collage of them suggests the composite experience of observation over time.

His photocollages add "Cubist effects to photography", Hockney says, and the effects range from witty art-historical references to ambitious extensions of Synthetic Cubist drawing, perspective and collage.

"It's our movement that tells us we're alive," Hockney says. This conviction has sharpened his use of diverse perspective means throughout his career, for they support or counteract the inherent stasis of the picture and thus sharpen our awareness of its illusionism. □

PIERRE
BONNARD
(1867-1947)

Table Scene, c. 1900. The French painter Bonnard was an amateur photographer from the 1890s until around 1920, when he seems to have given up photography. He only took pictures in the intimacy of his family circle, using the portable Kodak cameras which became available at the end of the 19th century. Their handiness and flexible rolls of film meant that spontaneous moments could be captured. A number of his paintings and book illustrations were inspired by the photographs he took. As in his paintings, Bonnard often made use of unexpected framing to open up the field of vision and to give the borders of a composition the same importance as its centre. Similar experiments with traditional perspective can be found in David Hockney's work, notably in his photocollages, where he breaks out of the rectangular framework.

Reflected glory of the Tāj Mahal

Raghu Rai: Tāj Mahal on a winter's morning

RAGHU RAI

of India, began taking photographs in 1965 and worked for ten years with a leading Indian daily newspaper, *The Statesman*, before becoming a freelance photographer. In 1982, he was appointed picture editor of the magazine *India Today*, and he has been the Magnum photographic correspondent in Delhi since 1977. His work, for which he has obtained many Indian and international awards, has been widely published and he has held one-man shows in Paris, New York, Prague, Hamburg and Tokyo. His publications include *Indira Gandhi* (1974), *Delhi: A Portrait of a City* (1983), *The Sikhs* (1984) and *Taj Mahal* (Singapore, 1986; Paris, 1987), a selection of colour photographs of the famous monument with a text by the Indian journalist Usha Rai.

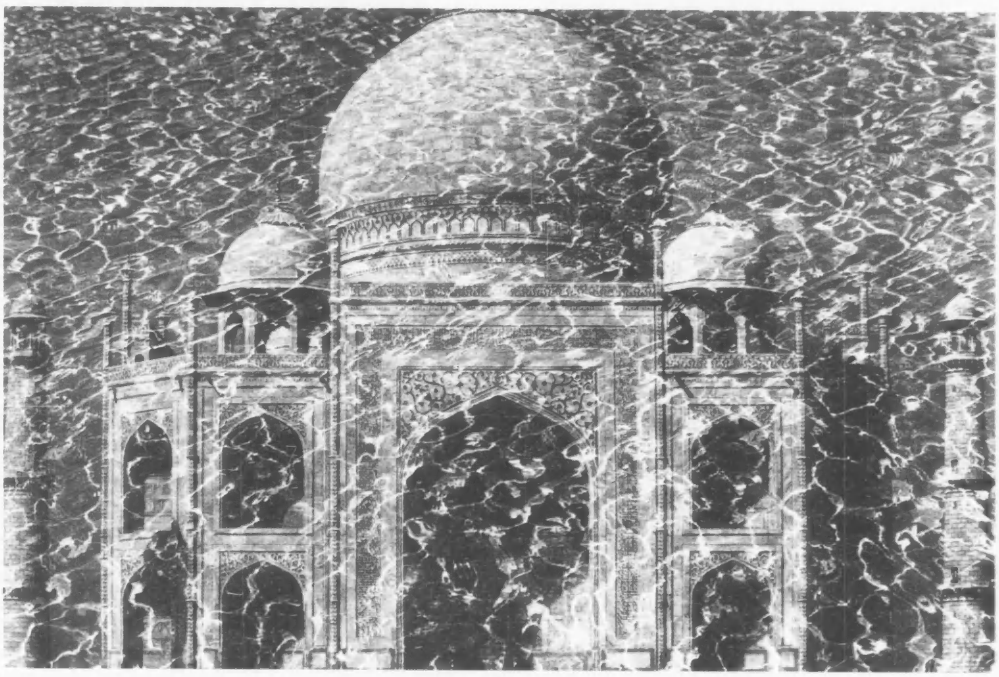
In the 17th century, the Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān created an architectural marvel, the Tāj Mahal, in memory of his much-loved wife, Mumtāz Mahal ("Chosen One of the Palace"), who died in childbirth in 1631 after having been the emperor's inseparable companion since their marriage in 1612.

Credit for the original conception of the mausoleum should no doubt go to Shāh Jahān himself, but Mughal tradition has it that several architects collaborated in drawing up the final plans. The chief architect was most probably Ustad Ahmad Lahori, a mathematician and astrologer renowned for his skill in designing buildings of vast dimensions and perfect symmetry.

The construction of the monument was begun in 1632 and took over twenty years. A team of several thousands of master-builders and craftsmen, masons, marble-workers, inlayers, goldsmiths, calligraphers and other decorators, came from all over India and Central Asia to work on this large-scale building project. The chosen site was outside Āgra, on the southern bank of the Yamuna River, whose course was diverted in order that the water would reflect and enhance the beauty of the monument.

This extraordinary mausoleum of luminous white marble, with its geometrically-arranged gardens covering almost 17 hectares, has inspired poets and writers for over 300 years and still draws countless pilgrims today. Rabindranāth Tagore, the Indian Nobel Prize-winning poet, described the Tāj as "the guardian of death tenderly covered with the shroud of memory".

Āgra has now become an industrial town and steelworks have been constructed nearby. The ensuing atmospheric pollution is endangering the Tāj Mahal, now included on Unesco's World Heritage List as a property of outstanding universal value. The Indian photographer Raghu Rai has recently taken a series of colour views of the Tāj, adding up to an exceptional profile that embodies both the dream and the reality of this masterpiece. Even when these photographs are transposed into black and white, as here, the power of his work remains intact. □



Raghu Rai: Reflection of the Tāj Mahal, Āgra, India

Raghu Rai: Visitors to the Tāj Mahal during the rainy season

Impressions of Venice

Dominique Roger: The Venetian lagoon

DOMINIQUE ROGER

of France, has been chief of the Photo Unit in Unesco's Division for Audio-Visual Information since 1976. As the Organization's official reporter-photographer she has travelled the world, and the results of her work can be seen in Unesco publications and international exhibitions. Her personal view of Venice was the theme of a show entitled "Venetian Wrinkles" (Paris, 1976; Venice, 1978). Recent exhibitions include "France: A Loving Look" (Paris, 1985; San Francisco, 1988), and "Colette at the Palais Royal" (Paris, 1987). She is the author of two books, published by Unesco, *Femmes/Women/Mujeres* (1975, to commemorate International Women's Year) and *Precious Waters* (1981).

On 4 November 1966, a tidal storm surge of exceptional height and duration completely flooded the city of Venice. The famous St. Mark's Square was covered by over a metre of water, a catastrophe that drew world attention to the growing dangers threatening the site. The Italian authorities immediately set up a Committee for the Safeguard of Venice, and Unesco launched an international campaign to save the city and to study the choices which have to be made if the protection of Venice and its lagoon is to be assured.

The historic city is built for the most part on piles driven into unstable silt in the centre of a crescent-shaped lagoon approximately 50 kilometres long by 10 kilometres wide, separated from the Adriatic Sea by a barrier of narrow islands and peninsulas. Venice has always been subject to flooding from the sea and to the deterioration of its foundations. However, high tides are increasingly frequent and the islands are sinking into the lagoon at a much faster rate than previously.

During the present century, some 2,500 hectares of the lagoon have been reclaimed for agriculture, a road and an airport have been built, and new fisheries and industrial zones have been developed.

This transformation has brought a series of additional environmental problems, including air pollution, which has already defaced many monuments and art treasures from the Venetian past; chemical and biological pollution of the waters, whether from industrial, agricultural or domestic origin; and erosion and sedimentation of the lagoon.

The magnificent buildings can be safeguarded only by the overall protection of the city and the rational management of the lagoon ecosystem, within a context of continuing intellectual, commercial, industrial and tourist activities. With this in view, Venice and its lagoon have been included on Unesco's World Heritage List of cultural and natural properties of universal value. □

Dominique Roger: Basin of St. Mark, Venice

Window on the world

The *Unesco Courier* aspires to be, above all, "a window open on the world", through which peoples and countries can be viewed on equal terms, irrespective of geographical position or demographic, economic or political weight, with the main focus on their cultural riches and their human and ecological problems. The first number of the *Courier*, published in February 1948, was in newspaper format. The change to an illustrated magazine, with covers in colour and a selection of photographs accompanying each article, took place in 1954. (Right, the first cover printed in full colour, showing a young Amazon Indian girl.) In 1960 colour pages were introduced inside certain numbers. The print run of the magazine, currently published in 34 languages, increased from 40,000 copies in 1949 to 400,000 in 1971, and passed the 500,000 mark in the 1980s. The readership is estimated at over 2 million. In forty years, the *Courier* has published a range of photographs which aim to give the widest possible view on the world and which add up to a visual encyclopaedia of some 30,000 illustrations. Back numbers can be obtained in microfiche or photocopied form by ordering from Unesco Headquarters in Paris, or from microform suppliers in the United States (addresses at right). In 1987 a cumulative index for 1948-1986 was published listing all the articles that have appeared in the *Unesco Courier*, by subject, by author and by month (currently available in French only).

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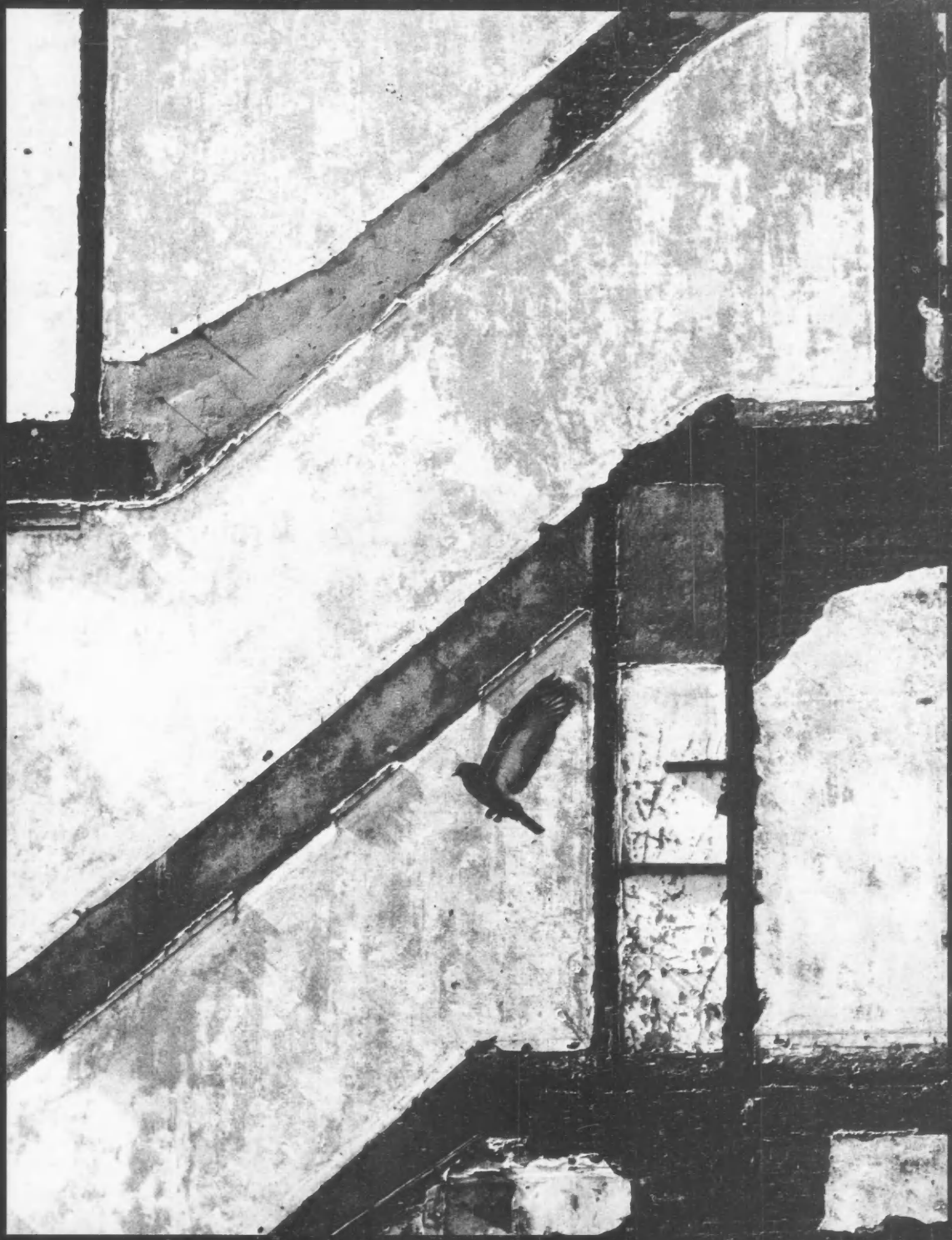

ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ
(1894-1985)
Landing Pigeon, New York City, 1960

"This was taken around 59th Street where they had demolished the houses, and I saw a pigeon flying in and out. The original idea for this photograph dates back to my days in Paris, where I also saw some old run-down houses and wanted to photograph them with a pigeon. But the pigeon never came. Here in New York I sat and waited. Time and time again I went back to the same place, but it was never right. Then one day I saw the lonely pigeon. I took maybe two or three pictures. The moment was there. I had waited maybe thirty years for that instant."

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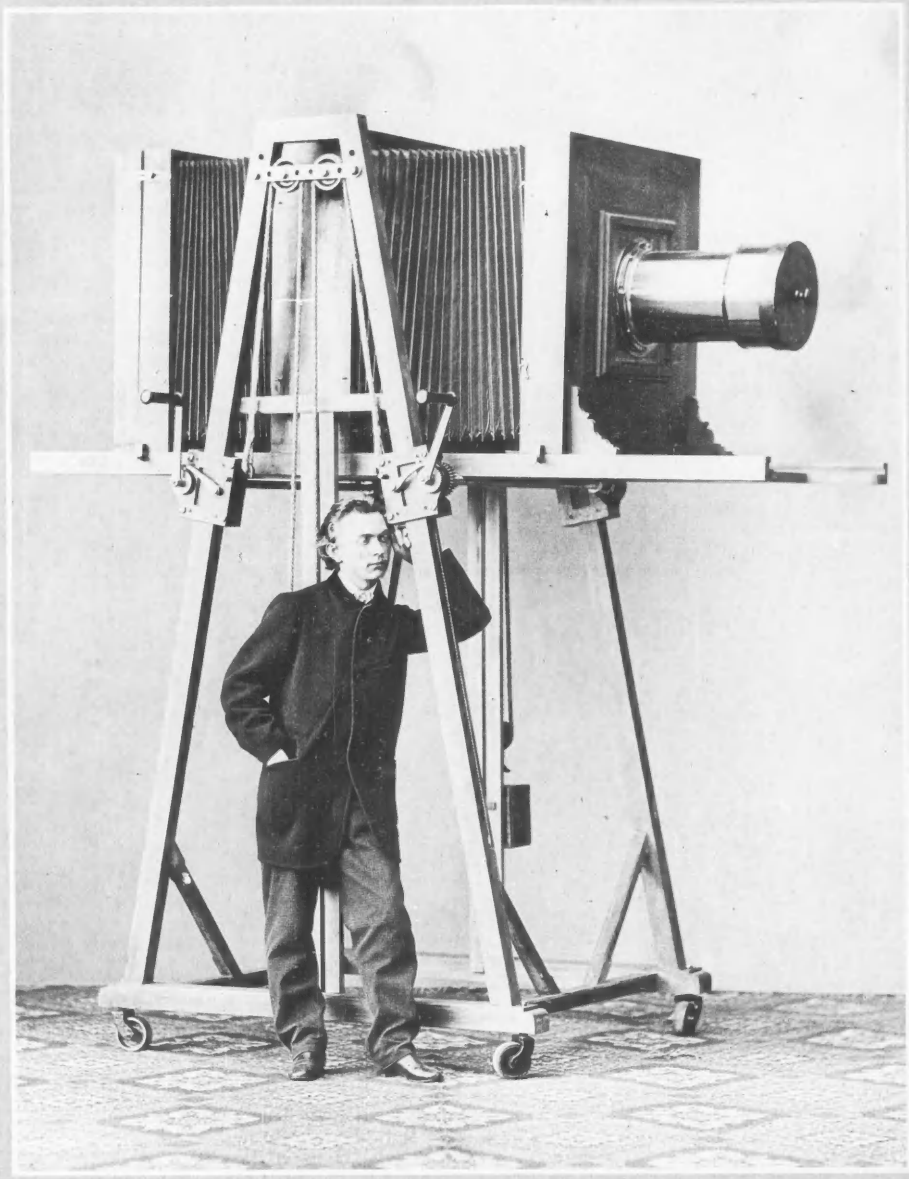
The photographic memory

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